

INTRODUCTION

WHAT ARE THE ORIGINS OF THE ZEITENWENDE, AND WHERE IS IT HEADING?

Three days after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, Chancellor Olaf Scholz raised many hopes with his statement about a turning point in history (*Zeitenwende*) and his implicit declaration that it heralded a new era in German politics.¹ These hopes, as well as the belief that Germany's strategy and even its entire strategic culture would change, were particularly vivid in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in the US, where Germany's policy to date had raised many questions.

We know today that the abrupt decision to make a 'U-turn' was prompted not only by Russia's onslaught, but also by the conviction that Ukraine would fall quickly, and the resulting fear of having to confront an aggressive Russia standing at the gates of the EU. Germany had to prepare for a sudden and far-reaching reorientation of its course, as well as a discussion about Germany's complicity in the outbreak of the war. It should be noted here that the Ukrainian forces' heroic resistance against the Russian troops, their defiant stand and fierce defence of their country, as well as the aggressor's ineptitude, surprised the Germans greatly. Consequently, their response gradually decelerated, the changes announced were diluted, and the government shifted to preparations for a prolonged conflict.

Apart from these immediate causes, however, there were deeper reasons for the proclamation of a 'new era' and a shift in Germany's course. These stemmed from a simple conclusion: if you pursue a policy of no alternatives, without a Plan B or, even worse, without revising the strategic assumptions of your Plan A, you have no choice but to announce a U-turn in the event that the original project fails.

The assumptions of Plan A, which were in keeping with Germany's strategic culture, arose from the post-unification euphoria and the belief in the 'end of history'. After 1990, Germany was surrounded by partners and allies, and became preoccupied with integrating the two parts of the country, pursuing

¹ In a speech to the Bundestag on 27 February 2022, Chancellor Scholz referred to the dawn of a 'new era' in the world, but not explicitly in German policy. However, his speech focused on various aspects of Germany's policy and emphasised the need to revise it, so the message was clear: the state's existing strategy had to change – a 'new era' was beginning for Germany as well. The speech in its entirety: 'Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Olaf Scholz am 27. Februar 2022', Die Bundesregierung, bundesregierung.de.

reforms and creating prosperity through its export model of manufacturing high-tech goods and trading them with the world. As a mercantile state, it championed globalisation and called for the reinforcement of the principles of multilateralism and its institutions, including European integration. The EU's enlargement to include the Central European countries, which Germany had advocated, greatly strengthened its importance both economically and politically. At the same time, the relative weakness of this region did not pose a competitive challenge to either Germany's policies or its economy. Germany was not worried about its security and felt that it did not need to invest in it. It did not feel threatened militarily from any side as its protective umbrella was provided by the US and the country's membership in NATO, which did not carry a large financial burden, and in any case afforded Germany the opportunity to refrain from fulfilling its obligations.

The paradigm of the need to build Europe's security together with Russia, which was also shared by key allies such as France,² became the top priority of Germany's security policy. Another important thing was the conviction that economic ties always have a stabilising effect on political relations and that energy dependence – even on authoritarian regimes – works both ways: thus it is actually this interdependence which protects Germany from economic and political blackmail. Indeed, Germany was supposed to have rid itself of any such dependence through its energy transformation, which had been underway since the early 2000s and involved phasing out nuclear as well as coal power and making renewable energy (and, temporarily, Russian gas) the foundation of the country's economic system. No less important in Germany's strategic culture was the belief that the other countries on the continent, including Russia, shared the German vision and believed (or were well on their way to adopting this belief as their own) that cooperation, pacifism, dialogue and diplomacy would guarantee the preservation of peace. An additional component of this strategy, which had a moral as well as a firm political and economic dimension, was the conviction that Germany had come to terms with its infamous history in an exemplary manner, and that it had a special obligation arising from its guilt and responsibility for World War II. This mainly applied to Russia, and ignored other former Soviet states, particularly Ukraine and Belarus.

This attitude began to generate many tensions with Germany's partners in the EU and NATO, but the country's political and business elite had no intention of making any major course corrections. Germany did not seriously engage in

² M. Menkiszak, *Tell me more. Russia on Macron's détente initiatives*, OSW, Warsaw 2021, osw.waw.pl.

discussions about its trade surpluses with the US or the structural imbalances in the eurozone, and largely ignored calls for the country to fulfil its NATO obligations and spend 2% of its GDP on defence. German politicians also failed to notice – or rather were unwilling to draw any lessons from the fact – that Russia under Vladimir Putin had been steadily morphing into a dictatorship. Its apparatus was becoming more and more oppressive towards its own citizens and revisionist in relation to its foreign partners, with increasingly neo-imperialist and aggressive goals towards its neighbours. Germany failed to implement a Plan B, or even to acknowledge that reality had refuted the basic assumptions of their Plan A, which they still considered to be ideal or requiring minor adjustments at most.

The ‘Russia first’ policy as the critical mistake of German strategy

From the point of view of Poland and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, we can identify three major mistakes of German policy. The first one, which led to the other two, was the stubborn adherence to the ‘Russia first’ principle in many areas, regardless of the changing determinants. When we ask about what German policy and business was focused on in its perception of Eastern Europe, including after the country’s reunification and even after the EU enlargement in 2004, the answer is: Russia. German strategic thinking was dominated by Russia and its natural resources, Russia and its mythical market (in the sense of its allegedly vast potential), and finally Russia and its sense of security along with its perception of threats.

This fixation led to repeated offers of strategic economic cooperation and ‘modernisation partnerships’³ as well as the formation of energy alliances and the development of competitive advantages on the gas market through Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 (the latter was completed but never put into operation). Finally, there was the pipe dream of building a European security system with the Russian Federation, which was also attempted at the EU level.⁴ The plans for economic cooperation with Russia did not change in any

³ From 2008, the Modernisation Partnership, which was initiated by the then head of the foreign ministry and the current German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier, was the most important project in German-Russian relations. It was designed to strengthen cooperation in areas such as energy, climate protection and research. Although a project under this name was also set up between the EU and Russia in 2010, it soon became clear that the latter was only interested in the transfer of technology and investment, but not in democratic standards, and had no intention of strengthening its democratic institutions or opening its market to Germany’s small and medium-sized companies, which was another objective of German policy.

⁴ For example Germany, acting as Russia’s advocate in the EU, proposed a new project (the so-called Meseberg initiative) in June 2008, a few days after the EU-Russia summit. The idea was to set up

significant way, even in the face of events and processes such as Putin and Dmitri Medvedev's presidency swap in Russia, the war in Georgia in 2008, and Russia's involvement in the Syrian war on the side of Bashar al-Assad's regime.⁵ Even Russia's annexation of Crimea and the Russian-instigated war in the Donbas in 2014 did not undermine Germany's desire to forge closer energy and economic ties. Likewise, no radical steps were taken to change Germany's policy towards the Kremlin in the wake of numerous Russian cyberattacks against the government and the Bundestag,⁶ Russia's interference in German election campaigns (for example in 2017) or the assassination of a Georgian citizen by Russian services in Berlin.

The second strategic mistake concerned the attitude towards Ukraine, especially after 2014. The fact that the Kremlin's version of the story about the annexation of Crimea and the attack on Ukraine has penetrated the German consciousness must be considered a great success for Russian foreign policy. As Professor Timothy Snyder has aptly pointed out, Russia has succeeded in confusing the story as much as it could, and making it so vague that it was no longer clear who was defending, who was attacking, what the objectives of either side were, or even who these sides represented. This message has reached the wider public and, despite being primitive, has begun to have a strong impact:⁷ "Ukraine has never been a real state, Ukrainians are not a real nation, and even if they are a nation, they are corrupt, and even if they are a state, this state is close to collapse. And in any case, they are all Nazis there".⁸ In this way, the officials of the state that has increasingly resorted to fascist rhetoric, scored repeated successes in the art of corruption and failed to hold free and fair elections, and where political assassinations are commonplace, have managed to manipulate a part of the global public opinion, including politicians from Germany, and to attribute most of their own flaws and deficiencies in Russia's political system to the Ukrainian people.

an EU-Russia political and security committee at ministerial level that would be chaired by the Russian foreign minister and the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy. This effort failed due to resistance from Germany's EU partners, who were dissatisfied with its unilateral moves, while Russia showed little interest in making the format viable.

⁵ While something that was defined as a 'technical break' did occur, this had little impact on economic ties. See A. Kwiatkowska, *Germany on Russia. Yes to links, no to rapprochement*, OSW, Warsaw 2014, osw.waw.pl.

⁶ K. Frymark, 'Niemcy: cyberatak na rządową sieć informatyczną', OSW, 7 March 2018, osw.waw.pl.

⁷ M. Thumann, 'Kein Grund, arrogant zu sein', Zeit Online, 22 March 2019, zeit.de.

⁸ T. Snyder, 'Germany's Historical Responsibility for Ukraine', a lecture in the Bundestag on 20 June 2017, per: marieluisebeck.de.

Professor Snyder has also convincingly explained why the Germans have fallen so easily for such propaganda.⁹ For a long time, they were effectively fed another Russian narrative which fitted in perfectly with Germany's reckoning with history: the Soviet Union and then Russia monopolised the role of the main victor as well as the main victim of World War II. This story omitted the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which remained unknown or even a taboo for the wider public. In this telling, there was no joint Soviet-German invasion of Poland, and there was no place for the Ukrainians and Belarusians who suffered far greater war casualties than the Russians – they disappeared from the German memory. Even just a few weeks before the 2022 invasion, educated people and senior politicians in Germany spoke of 'more than 20 million Russian victims of World War II', while others invoked the argument of Germany's guilt and obligations towards Russia to promote special relations with that country and even specific economic projects.¹⁰ This view spread so widely and became so deeply entrenched not only because of the efficiency of the Soviet (and then Russian) diplomatic service, but also because it was convenient for the German government and justified the pursuit of a unique relationship with Russia.

The third mistake of the German strategy must be considered as fundamental, particularly with regard to Poland and the Baltic states. The source of this approach lies in the prioritisation of dealings with Russia. This effectively meant that a third country, not bound to Germany by key alliances in the European Union and NATO, had more say in shaping German policy than its closest allies and partners, as the interests of that country were considered more important. The situation that Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia found themselves in bordered on the absurd. Poland's grateful memory of Germany as an advocate and supporter of its membership in NATO, and later in the EU, was still vivid when the decision to build the Nord Stream 1 gas pipeline was announced in 2005. Despite justified objections from the countries in the region, this project was consistently pursued and even portrayed as a politically insignificant endeavour that would bring economic benefits to the EU as a whole. In addition, in the area of security policy, Poland and the Baltic states were confronted with reports of meetings in a German-French-Russian triangle

⁹ *Ibidem*, and in Snyder's lecture series at Yale University entitled *The Making of Modern Ukraine*, youtube.com.

¹⁰ See for example [Steinmeier's interview with the Rheinische Post of 6 February 2021](#), in which he stated that energy ties are one of the last bridges connecting Germany with Russia, and pointed out that Germany must take into account the historical dimension of relations between the two countries, including the Third Reich's attack on the Soviet Union. The statement caused an outcry in Ukraine and elsewhere.

(for example in Deauville, France in 2010) which discussed issues such as the European security architecture and the construction of a training centre for the Russian army by Germany's Rheinmetall in Mulino near Moscow.

Germany failed to conduct a profound review of its strategy even after the annexation of Crimea, which seemed to undeniably prove that Europe was facing a major security crisis. This phase of the crisis provided Germany with an opportunity for a new opening in relations with its partners and its closest eastern neighbour, Poland. Instead, as a result of the efforts of the influential pro-Russian lobby,¹¹ the uncritical belief in building interdependence and the option of relying on Russian gas for Germany's energy transition gained traction instead of fading away. Consequently, Germany signed an agreement to build more Nord Stream pipelines, which convinced Poland even more that its most important ally in Europe was pursuing a policy that undermined its security.

The *Zeitenwende* in progress

In response to the outbreak of war on 24 February 2022, which exposed the failure of Germany's Plan A, Chancellor Scholz, at a specially convened meeting of the Bundestag, announced unprecedented decisions on changes to Germany's domestic and foreign policies. These included an agreement to dramatically increase defence spending, with the creation of a €100 billion special fund and the allocation of more than 2% of the country's GDP to defence annually. He also announced plans to achieve energy independence for Germany by building LNG terminals and speeding up the development of the renewable energy sector. This U-turn in Germany's policy towards Russia involved not only a harsh and up-front condemnation of its actions, but also a suspension of the certification process for the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, the approval of plans to exclude selected Russian banks from the SWIFT clearing system, and an agreement to supply weapons to Ukraine.

After the initial shock caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the outbreak of full-scale war between the two largest countries in Europe, Germany has given the name *Zeitenwende* (a new era) to this process of revising its policies. Therefore, it is appropriate to ask about the future of this idea, and whether it can be regarded as Germany's strategic plan in the years to come.

¹¹ G. Chazan, 'Germany's tangled relationship with Russia', Financial Times, 22 May 2023, ft.com.

A year into the 'new era', we can certainly say that Germany has experienced a change of mentality and also introduced tangible, radical reforms in selected spheres. However, these have only occurred in those areas that have been defined as essential, where a failure to refocus would have endangered the security of the country and its citizens. To this end, Germany has so far:

- expanded its imagination: that is, it has recognised that even unimaginable scenarios can come true, and therefore it is necessary to prepare for them: for example, Germany (just like any other country) can be blackmailed by Russia;
- pushed through reforms, mainly in the energy sphere (such as replacing Russian gas and its transport routes with LNG from floating and onshore gas terminals): given the wartime environment, this has been (partly so far) carried out at lightning speed and with the deployment of enormous resources.

On the other hand, there has been no major mental shift on the issue of accountability for the past policy, or the prosecution and punishment of those responsible for its creation at the behest, or at least under the influence, of Gazprom. This is demonstrated not only by the impunity of former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, but also by the case of the Minister-President of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Manuela Schwesig, and the 'climate foundation' set up by that federal state's government to advance the interests of the Russian gas monopoly.¹² Although a commission of inquiry has been looking into the matter, the local branch of the SPD is bent on sabotaging its work,¹³ while Schwesig's popularity remains unabated.

Nor has there been any tangible change in Germany's attitude towards the Central and Eastern European countries and the calls that they should be treated as partners. It turned out that the governments of these countries perceived and assessed Russia's strategy more accurately, and rightly perceived the US as the only guarantor of European security. A part of the German political elite has acknowledged the superiority of the CEE countries' expertise and conduct, but this has not been followed by sufficient consideration of their views in shaping Germany's current course (*vide* the issue of Ukraine's membership

¹² R. Formuszewicz, 'Germany: attempt to circumvent US sanctions on Nord Stream 2', OSW, 14 January 2021, osw.waw.pl.

¹³ "Tepper: Przekręć Nord Stream 2 „na fundację”, Biznes Alert, 24 February 2023, biznesalert.pl.

in NATO or forging a new European policy towards Russia). It is hard not to get the impression that Germany continues to offer the countries of Central and Eastern Europe its ‘tutelage’ at best, and possibly its ‘assistance’ in representing their interests, instead of an equal, partner-like approach. Many countries interpret this as an incapacitating degree of paternalism.¹⁴

Immediately after Ukraine repelled the Russian attack in the first weeks of the invasion, investments in rebuilding the Bundeswehr were no longer seen as crucial and necessary. As such, they will drop down the list of goals to be achieved with the ‘German speed’ that Scholz boasted about when the projects to build floating LNG gas terminals were being implemented.

The future of the *Zeitenwende*: a logo and a vehicle for German reforms at home and in the EU

In the medium and long term, the SPD-Greens-FDP cabinet is likely to incorporate the *Zeitenwende* concept into its programme as part of the coalition agreement.¹⁵ Upon taking power, the ‘coalition of progress’ declared that its main task would be to put an end to the stagnation and unquestioning defence of the *status quo* of Angela Merkel’s government, while also pledging profound reforms in almost all areas of the state’s functioning. The radical transition towards a zero-carbon economy, the acceleration of the digital transformation, the severance of investment and export dependencies: these were all correctly defined in the coalition agreement as tasks that pose major social and economic challenges and also require revolutionary overhauls and massive investments. A distinctive narrative will emerge by the end of the coalition’s current term, and probably also during the next ones – if the mainstream parties hold onto power. At its core will be the assertion that the ‘new era’ in politics (not only in Germany, but also in the world), as well as the current war-time environment, make radical changes:

- a) even more urgent,
- b) necessary, even if they entail considerable costs (both financial and social),
- c) more of an investment than an expense.

¹⁴ Nota bene, residents of the eastern *Länder* and Germans with migrant backgrounds also complain about such treatment in Germany itself. Therefore, it can be assumed that this is a kind of *modus operandi* which German politicians often use.

¹⁵ ‘Niemiecka umowa koalicyjna – plan modernizacji państwa’, OSW, 26 November 2021, osw.waw.pl.

This portrayal of the *Zeitenwende* and its aforementioned priorities, which are reflected in the government's programme, will be touted as the driving force for building Germany's new economic (and by extension political) strength.

The concept of the narrative that turns the *Zeitenwende* into a 'super-reform', a 'reform of all reforms', and the driving force of Germany's development has a number of advantages from the point of view of the decision-makers who have to manage the process of instituting these profound changes in the country. Firstly, it could make it easier (although still far from easy) to win public support for these transformations, which will inevitably require many sacrifices. Secondly, it will push aside the uncomfortable issues that were hotly debated at the beginning of the Russian invasion, centring on Germany's mistakes in security policy (the neglect of the Bundeswehr), foreign policy (the 'Russia first' policy, similar degrees of economic dependence on Russia and China) and energy policy (the growing dependence on the Russian regime). This will not only provide an opportunity to mute the calls for accountability for these strategic blunders and the failure to come up with alternatives; it will also offer an excuse to shift the focus away from issues that are no longer defined as the most urgent, such as the reform of the Bundeswehr and the country's security policy. These reforms will not be scrapped, but the pace of their implementation will drop from revolutionary to one that is more typical for adjustments (even if far-reaching) to the existing model (see Chapter IV).

Thirdly and finally, Germany hopes to strengthen itself economically thanks to the transformations it chooses to focus on: the digital and energy revolutions, finding new sources of economic development, and adapting to the new model of globalisation with a pivotal role for China (see Chapters I, II). This will allow Germany to continue exercising leadership in the European Union, which it wants to transform into a regional power which can govern the world in the 'new multipolar international order' (see Chapter III).¹⁶ It should be noted that German politicians are now speaking openly about this exercise of leadership; this marks a major change compared to the previous period, when most of them (led by Merkel) avoided such words and went no further than to articulate the need for German responsibility (although in reality they were managing and directing many processes in the EU).¹⁷ This dissonance

¹⁶ L. Gibadło, J. Gotkowska, 'Germany's first national security strategy: the minimal consensus', *OSW Commentary*, no. 519, 26 June 2023, osw.waw.pl.

¹⁷ As Germany's economy grew stronger at the turn of the 2000s and 2010s (whether due to its own reforms, such as Agenda 2010, or owing to the course of the financial and euro crisis), high-profile

between the realities of decision-making processes in the EU and the rhetoric of restraint irritated many observers and participants in European politics. This has now changed, and Germany is openly proclaiming its desire to lead, including in the field of European defence. On a side note, an interesting correlation can be observed: under Merkel's government, a strong and rising Germany avoided overtly proclaiming this need; now it does so readily, even though it is economically weaker and its credibility has taken a hit from the exposure of its strategic mistakes and its initial procrastinating response to the Russian onslaught on Ukraine, including its inadequate assistance (especially in terms of military aid) to this country.

The *Zeitenwende* project, understood as the modernisation of Germany and the reinforcement of its economic and political power, may also encompass the reconstruction of Ukraine and the establishment of a kind of strategic partnership with this country. Germany will support Ukraine on an *ad hoc* basis, employing its usual method of providing development aid worldwide. The win-win principle,¹⁸ whereby both the beneficiary countries and German companies reap rewards, would ensure benefits not only for Ukraine, but also for Germany. The latter would get a powerful boost to its development in view of the enormity of this project: after all, we are talking about the reconstruction of an entire country. In the long term, for many German businesses this 'Ukrainian' boost could replace their dreams of a 'Russian' boost, that is, tapping into the mythical potential of the Russian market. In this sense, Ukraine could become a 'new Russia' for Germany (not to be confused with Putin's dream of 'Novorossiia'): cooperation with this country will provide Germany with the advantages that the supposed energy interdependence and cooperation with the Russian Federation offered and was expected to offer – and even more. This does not mean, of course, that Germany will forgo cooperation with Russia altogether, especially if the latter turns back from its current neo-imperial path of 'development'.

Ukraine will likely be eager (for its own benefit) to play an important role in strengthening Germany's economic clout. However, this will also require social changes within Germany itself. German politicians will have to manage the tensions that have built up and will continue to do so after taking in a million Ukrainian war refugees within a short space of time. The cumulative effect

politicians increasingly claimed that 'German is now the language of Europe', meaning that Germany was setting the tone for the continent (such as Volker Kauder, head of the Christian Democrats in the Bundestag at the time).

¹⁸ K. Frymark, *Development co-operation, made in Germany*, OSW, Warsaw 2015, osw.waw.pl.

of their influx and a significant increase in regular asylum applications from other countries has led to conflicts over the availability and redistribution of resources and goods (housing, places in schools, social benefits). The polarisation of the population is particularly easy to see in the east, where living standards remain lower than in the western federal states. In the eastern *Länder*, this has been accompanied by less willingness to help Ukraine and high support for the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), which has been spreading Russian propaganda there (see Chapter V).

The new historical debate: an unintended consequence of the *Zeitenwende*

Germany's shift towards cooperation with Ukraine may trigger a historical discussion worthy of the great debates that Germany has witnessed and participated in every decade or so since the end of World War II. These debates are an inherent part of Germany's political culture, and they have largely shaped the public's historical awareness and perception of the past. At least a dozen such debates have taken place, focusing primarily on reckoning, guilt and responsibility for the course and consequences of the world wars.¹⁹ This time, such a debate would likely be devoted to colonialism and German imperialism, albeit in the east of Europe rather than in Africa, as the latter aspect already features in the domestic discourse, both historical and political.²⁰ In its broadest scope, this new debate would be about Ukraine, and certainly also about Poland. It is even conceivable that there will be a synergy between the debate about German colonialism and imperialism in the east under Adolf Hitler and the discussions (which are already taking place) about offering compensation for the consequences of the crimes that Germany committed in Poland.

The emergence of such a debate seems likely, firstly because the above-mentioned facts about the history of Ukraine and its falsification by Russian propaganda

¹⁹ The 1960s marked the beginning of various historical debates, including the 'dispute over Fischer's theses', the dispute between historians over the essence of Nazism, the discussions about the meaning of the date of 8 May, and the Walser-Bubis debate on the German attitude to the Holocaust. Over the decades, every controversial topic, especially those related to World War II, has triggered high-profile debates. Most of them resonated with the public and influenced the formation of 'German memory'. They also showed how the perception of various historical events changed radically over time. This is particularly evident in the shifting perception of 8 May 1945: from the day of defeat and one of the darkest dates in German history to a day of liberation and even victory. This shift also signalled the desire to complete the historical reckoning, which was later confirmed by the Walser-Bubis debate. See A. Kwiatkowska, *It's not (only) about Erika Steinbach. Three myths in the German discourse on the resettlements*, OSW, Warsaw 2010, osw.waw.pl.

²⁰ 'Völkermord an Herero und Nama: Abkommen zwischen Deutschland und Namibia', Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 22 June 2021, bpb.de.

have reached wider public opinion during the current Russian-Ukrainian war. Secondly, the knowledge about Germany's special historical responsibility towards Ukraine, the 'granary of Europe' that was the main target of the Third Reich's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, has also begun to filter through.²¹ Thirdly, the example of the Russian invasions of Ukraine in 2014 and 2022 is helping Germany understand how knowledge of history – or the lack thereof – can influence current politics.²² And fourthly, launching such a discussion will become the focus and ambition of many German historians and scholars of Eastern Europe, who have recently come to prominence and gained immense popularity, and whose expertise is finally in demand. Many of them belong to the younger generation and intend to stay active for many years to come; they are adept at using social media tools to reach the wider public.²³

This report is not only a record of the events following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the outbreak of full-scale war in Europe in 2022. It is also an attempt to understand whether and how German policy has influenced these developments, and what consequences this conflict will have for Germany. Above all, however, the aim of this publication is to critically analyse both the changes that are currently taking place in Germany and the evolution of the *Zeitenwende* project (the U-turn in the country's policies and economy) in the near future and in the new, emerging international order.

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²¹ T. Snyder, 'Nazistowskie sny o zniewolonej Ukrainie', Krytyka Polityczna, 12 July 2017, krytyka-polityczna.pl.

²² Various educational projects have been launched with the aim of deepening knowledge of Ukrainian history and Ukrainian-German relations: for example, a special history website of the German-Ukrainian Historians' Commission was created at ukrainianhistoryportal.org.

²³ See for example Ostauschuss, salonkolumnisten.com/ostausschuss/.